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A NEW CARDINAL FROM  
CENTRAL LOWER CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

BY

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During a short trip of twenty-three days made into the central part of the peninsula of Lower California during April, 1940, several localities not hitherto accessible by automobile were visited. Probably the most interesting of these was the region of the old Mission of Santa Gertrudis, a section from which ornithological records, so far as the writer is aware, are almost entirely unknown.

Santa Gertrudis Mission is situated in a rocky canyon of the western slope of the main peninsular mountain chain, in the extreme northeastern section of the Viscaïno Desert and about twenty-five miles east and south of Calmalli, near the 28th degree of latitude. A small flow, of what seemed to be permanently running water was present in the stream bed, though the large boulder-studded arroyo gave ample evidence of periodical run-offs of cloudburst proportions. A few date and fan palms were growing about the small areas devoted to gardens by the half dozen families that lived nearby.

The native flora appeared to be mainly of the same species to be found growing abundantly either to the northward or southward of this locality. The most spectacular of these consisted of numerous species of cacti, some of which were very large, mesquites, a few ironwoods and several large wild fig trees. This latter species reaches its northern limit in dwarfed condition near Yubay, less than a hundred miles to the northward. In the arroyo a few miles west of Santa Gertrudis Mission, a fairly large stand of Palo Blancos was seen. This beautiful tree, so far

as the writer can determine, is not found north of this locality, though it grows abundantly in the washes farther southward in the Cape region.

Our party arrived at Santa Gertrudis about noon on April 22 and departed on the morning of April 25. During this very short time the writer endeavored to assemble and preserve a representative collection of birds and mammals. Needless to say much was left for a more thorough investigation at some future date. The presence of Xantus Hummingbirds (*Basilinna xantusii*), several of which were observed, definitely records this Cape species from a new locality near the northernmost extremity of its range. Three breeding male Cardinals were collected, which, upon comparison, were found to represent a new race. This form may be known as

### **Richmondena cardinalis seftoni** subsp. nov.

#### SANTA GERTRUDIS CARDINAL

*Type*.—From Santa Gertrudis Mission, Lower California, Mexico; no. 18147, collection of the San Diego Society of Natural History; breeding male; collected by Laurence M. Huey, April 25, 1940.

*Characters*.—Intermediate in size between the smaller *Richmondena cardinalis ignea* of the Cape region and the larger *R. c. superba* of northern Sonora and southern Arizona. *R. c. seftoni* is considerably paler in color and has a smaller beak than either of the above compared forms, which, geographically, are its nearest relatives. Both of these characters are at once evident when comparisons are made, and the color feature marks this Cardinal as one of the palest of the group.

*Range*.—Found at Santa Gertrudis Mission and observed at Rancho Miraflores, twelve miles to the westward and situated on the same drainage course as the Mission.

*Remarks*.—The general character of this central section of the peninsula, where northern and southern floras intermingle, together with the climatic influences of cool westerly trade winds and heated desert currents, is such as would be expected to develop local divergent races, especially of plastic sedentary species. Such is the case with the form here described. This point is further illustrated by other species with mid-peninsular forms in this general district, viz: Desert Thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei arenicola*), San Pablo Brown Towhee (*Pipilo fuscus aripolius*), and San Ignacio Poorwill (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii dickeyi*). However, the tendency of these birds just mentioned is towards darker coloration rather than the pallid trend shown in the Cardinal.

This brilliant bird is named in honor of Joseph W. Sefton, Jr., President of the San Diego Society of Natural History, with whom the writer has spent many profitable days afield.

*Specimens examined and Measurements.*—As the only specimens collected of *R. c. seftoni* were males, only males have been used in this comparison; without doubt, had females been available other valuable characters in color and measurements would have been demonstrated, as is the case with other races of *Richmondena*.

## MEASUREMENTS OF MALES IN MILLIMETERS

Coll. No.	Locality	Wing	Tail	Tarsus	Culmen	Width of Upper Mandible
<b><i>Richmondena cardinalis seftoni</i></b>						
18135*	Santa Gertrudis, L. C., Mex. ....	93.0	108.2	26.2	18.3	9.9
18146	Santa Gertrudis, L. C., Mex. ....	94.8	108.0	25.5	18.0	9.6
18147†	Santa Gertrudis, L. C., Mex. ....	95.9	107.2	25.7	17.3	9.2
AVERAGE	.....	94.4	107.8	25.8	17.8	9.5
<b><i>Richmondena cardinalis ignea</i></b>						
15286‡	Cape San Lucas, L. C., Mex. ....	91.6	106.1	26.0	19.4	10.5
15287	Carmen Island, L. C., Mex. ....	93.5	100.5	24.9	19.5	11.0
15288	Carmen Island, L. C., Mex. ....	91.2	101.2	25.6	20.7	11.6
10255	San José del Cabo, L. C., Mex. ..	89.6	99.2	26.0	19.0	10.6
AVERAGE	.....	92.6	101.7	25.6	19.6	10.9
<b><i>Richmondena cardinalis superba</i></b>						
81§	Alamo Canyon, Ajo Mts., Ariz. ..	100.2	112.8	27.0	19.4	10.9
87§	Alamo Canyon, Ajo Mts., Ariz. ..	99.2	113.0	26.0	19.9	10.3
313§	Bates Well, Pima Co., Ariz. ....	98.8	114.3	26.4	20.9	10.1
616	Fort Lowell, Pima Co., Ariz. ....	101.1	117.5	26.0	19.6	11.0
622	Fort Lowell, Pima Co., Ariz. ....	101.5	114.6	26.8	19.9	10.9
634	Fort Lowell, Pima Co., Ariz. ....	103.0	116.4	27.7	20.9	10.9
AVERAGE	.....	100.6	114.7	26.6	20.1	10.6

\* Collection of San Diego Society of Natural History, unless otherwise designated.

† Type.

‡ Topotype.

|| Collection of L. M. Huey, and Topotype.

§ Field number, National Park Service-San Diego Society of Natural History Cooperative Survey, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, Arizona, 1939.

